



C.F. Adams Charitable Trust

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History. Established in 1987 by Charles Francis Adams, the C. F. Adams Charitable Trust is a private grantmaking foundation headquartered in Boston, MA. Prior to his death in 1999, Mr. Adams advised the other trustees that he had completed his commitments to the institutions he cared deeply about and encouraged them to seek out new opportunities to carry on his quiet and determined leadership in addressing community needs. Today, the Trust provides funding in two primary areas: To improve the quality of children's mental health in Massachusetts and to improve the quality of life in Downeast Maine.

Downeast Focus. Based on Mr. Adams' love of sailing in the Gulf of Maine, the trustees initially decided to focus on coastal Maine and narrowed that focus even further to the region east of Acadia from Schoodic Peninsula to Eastport because of the significant needs and few private sector resources. In a series of meetings in 2000 with local community representatives (fishermen, educators, selectmen, health professionals, non-profit representatives), they asked "*What is important to understand about the region?*" and "*What is on your wish list?*" These conversations helped launch the Trust's involvement in the region by emphasizing efforts that engage the local citizenry in helping to shape the future of their communities. A later series of discussions with local leaders in 2008 revealed a strong sense of hope and confidence in the region and underscored the importance of respect for the special qualities of the people and the natural assets there. Since then, the continuous relationship building and inquiry have been guiding principles for the work of the foundation in the region.

Grantmaking. From three initial grants totaling \$75,000, the level of grantmaking has grown to as much as \$400,000 per year in the region. Sustained support has been provided to some organizations to reinforce the nonprofit infrastructure in the region. Other grants have been one-time investments for special projects. The Trust's regional approach to grantmaking has been recognized as a model in Maine for both its sustained involvement with the nonprofit organizations and its efforts to strengthen their management and programs through professional development opportunities. The Trust does not accept unsolicited proposals. Rather, it invites organizations to submit requests after a determination has been made that there is a potential fit with its funding interests. Organizations are encouraged to review the information on the website cfadamstrust.org to learn more about the foundation's focus and interests.

Nonprofit Infrastructure Support. Since 2003, the Trust has been collaborating with the Maine Philanthropy Center and the Maine Community Foundation to convene Downeast nonprofit executives to explore common interests and organizational development needs. The Trust has provided grants to enable the nonprofit directors to attend statewide philanthropy and technical assistance conferences and to engage a coordinator for quarterly meetings of the *Downeast Nonprofit Network* where peer learning and resource sharing is the focus of each agenda.